



Saguaro National Park News Release

For Immediate Release

March 26, 2008

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April Programs Offered at Saguaro National Park

Saguaro National Park is offering a series of programs this spring that will explore the wonderful natural and cultural history of the park. Join naturalists for an evening walk in the park or join a local expert for a presentation in the visitor center. Programs will be offered at both districts. There is no charge for interpretive programs, but park entrance fees apply.

Special Programs offered at the Rincon Mountain District (Saguaro East) include:

April 1 8:30 a.m. Desert Bird Walk

Bring your binoculars and join the quest for desert birds. This easy 2-hour, 1-mile walk will introduce you to some of the birds that call Saguaro National Park home. Reserve a space on this walk by calling the visitor center at (520) 733-5153. ***This program will also be offered on April 8.***

April 1 9:00 a.m. Desert Morning Hike

Join a park naturalist for this 3-hour, 4-mile exploration of Saguaro National Park. Wear sturdy hiking shoes and bring water and a trail snack. Advance registration is recommended; call the visitor center at (520) 733-5153 to sign up. ***This program will also be offered on 2, 8, 9, 15 and 16.***

April 5 10:00 Fiesta de Saguaro

This special event, which begins at 10:00 am and concludes at 4:00 pm, celebrates the area's Hispanic heritage and culture. The event will include guest speakers, exhibits, craft demonstrators, children's activities, Folklorico dancers and a mariachi band w. Vendors will also be on site preparing and selling traditional food. A fee shuttle service will be provided from the Sahuaro Baptist Church, located at Old Spanish Trail (at Houghton Road). Call the visitor center at 733-5153 for further information. Event is accessible.

April 6 10:00 a.m. 1933 to Today: Saguaro National Park

Take an easy, 1 mile walk back in time to learn how and why Saguaro National Park was created. Wear comfortable walking shoes and bring water. Advance registration is recommended and can be made by calling (520) 733-5153. ***This program will also be offered on April 13, 20 and 27.***

April 8 7:00 p.m. Star Party

Join park naturalists for an introduction to astronomy and a look at the desert night sky. Telescopes and binoculars will be available. Advance registration is required and can be made by calling the visitor center at (520) 733-5153. Program is accessible.

April 10 10:00 a.m. Prehistoric People in the Sonoran Desert

Stop by the visitor center patio and join Volunteer Walter Coe for an exploration into the prehistory of this area; learn who lived here over a thousand years ago and what they used for food, clothing and shelter. This is an on-going, informal presentation. Program is accessible.

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April 11 7:00 p.m. Night Walk

This year Saguaro National Park celebrates its 75th Birthday. To celebrate, the park is offering a special series of programs highlighting important park themes. Join Park Ranger Josh Boles for this 1.5 hour hike through the Sonoran Desert at night and discover how important dark nights are to the plants and animals of Saguaro National Park. Bring water and a flashlight. Space is limited, so call the visitor center at (520) 733-5153 to reserve your spot. ***This program will also be offered on April 25.***

April 12 7:00 – 10:30 a.m. Buffelgrass Weed Pull (Rincon Mtn District)

Volunteers will work with Park staff to remove a patch of buffelgrass, an invasive non-native plant which threatens the Sonoran Desert. We will be meeting at the Visitors Center and then carpool to the Javelina picnic area work site. Please park in the Administrative Parking Lot (1st right after entering the park, follow around to lot just south of Visitor Center Parking Lot). Wear sturdy hiking shoes, long pants and a hat. Bring water and gloves (if you have them); tools and gloves will be provided. Following the event, we will relax over snacks and beverages. RSVP to 733-5187 or sign up at the Visitors Center so we can get a general head count. We look forward to seeing you there!

April 17 7:00 p.m. Strange Looking Plants in Saguaro National Park

The many strange looking plants thriving here in Saguaro National Park look quite different than the plants our out-of-town visitors are accustomed to seeing. Learn how these special structures enable native plants to survive in their desert home. Advance registration is suggested and can be made by calling (520) 733-5153. Program is accessible.

April 23 7:00 p.m. Geysers, Grizzlies...and Cactus?

Come celebrate National Parks Week with a virtual tour of the extensive system of national parks, monuments, recreation areas, historic sites and more. Park Ranger Jeff Wallner shares his many visits to our national park sites as he shows us how it all got started. Reservations are recommended and can be made by calling 733-5153. Program is accessible.

April 26 9:00 a.m. National Junior Ranger Day

Come and join us for National Junior Ranger Day 2008. Join park naturalists for a two-hour, one-mile guided hike on the Freeman Homestead Trail. There will be a graduation ceremony in the Visitor Center Auditorium following the hike. Dress for the weather, bring water, wear comfortable hiking shoes, and a hat. This event is for ages 6-11, and families must attend with the Junior Rangers. Space is limited, please call and make your reservation today! Call the Visitor Center at 733-5153. There is no charge for this event.

Special Programs offered at the Tucson Mountain District (Saguaro West) include:

Note: Please call first to confirm program is still being presented. Thank you. 520-733-5158

April 1 10:45 a.m. Take a Walk on the Wild Side

Join our Park Naturalist for an "off the trail" adventure, weaving your way amongst the sticky desert plants and down the sandy wash. 2 hours, 1 mile. **This program also offered at 10:45 a.m. on the following dates: April 1,2,4,8,10,11 and 12th.**

April 1 2:15 p.m. Step Into My Wilderness

A 30 minute patio presentation. "Wilderness!" The word arouses many deep emotions. Should we embrace it or should we be afraid of it? Should it be preserved or conquered? Join a park ranger to discuss this land of many choices. **This program also offered on the following times and dates: 2:15 p.m. on April 3,10,11 and 12th. 3:15 p.m. on April 2,4,8, and 9th. 11:45 a.m. on April 5th. Program is accessible.**

April 2 11:45 a.m. They Are Mining In our National Park?

No, but they did before it became a National Park. If you are interested in the mining in this region and other local history, join us for this program. **This program also offered April 9th at 10:45 a.m. Program is accessible.**

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April 2 2:15 p.m. Those Who Came Before

A 40 minute patio talk on the Hohokam (those who are gone) who inhabited this area from A.D. 300 to A.D. 1450. Program is accessible.

April 3 10:15 a.m. Desert Sojourn

Most humans would describe the Sonoran Desert Environment as being harsh. However, for the plants and animals that live here it is heaven on earth. Come along on a walk around the "old water hole" and find out why. 1/4 mile, 1 ½ hours. **This program is offered April 3, 10 and 17th at 10:15 a.m.**

April 3 1:45 p.m. Messages from the Past

People have lived in the Sonoran Desert area for 11,000 years. Come along on a Ranger-guided walk to Signal Hill to view and enjoy some of the evidence people of the past have left behind. ½ mile, 1 ½ hours. **This program is offered April 3, 10 and 17th at 1:45 p.m.**

April 4 11:45 a.m. and 2:15 p.m. CCC and Saguaro National Park

Learn the history of the Civilian Conservation Corps workers in the Tucson Mountains, the projects they undertook and their lasting legacy as both the CCC and Saguaro National Park celebrate 75 years since their creation. The program consists of a brief (15-20 min) slide show. **This program is also given on the following dates and times: April 11 and 12 at 11:45 a.m. and 3:15 p.m. each day.** Program is accessible.

April 5 7:00 a.m. Bird Walk

Join experienced birding guide John Higgins to see some of the twenty five species of birds that are year-round residents of Saguaro National Park. Meet at the Red Hills Visitor Center, 2700 N. Kinney Road. The group will caravan to several nearby locations. The walking is considered easy, on flat but dirt and rocky trails. Persons of all ages, with or without bird watching experience, are welcome. Participants are encouraged to bring water and sun protection, and binoculars and bird guides if you have them. The walk usually lasts 1.5 hours. For more information call 733-5158.

April 5 10:45 a.m. Homesteading Adventures in the Desert

Help us celebrate 75 years of Saguaro National Park as a park ranger presents the oral history surrounding Mexican American homesteader's adventures in and around our Saguaro National Park. **This program also given April 6, 7 at 10:45 a.m. and April 9 at 11:45 a.m.** Program is accessible.

April 5 2:15 p.m. Snakes, Lizards and Desert Tortoises

A 40 min. patio presentation on communication skills, special adaptations and defense systems of these often misunderstood creatures. A little bit of folk lore is also shared. **This program is also given at 2:15 p.m. on April 6, 7, 8 and 9th.** Program is accessible.

April 5 4:45 p.m. Twilight Hike

These hikes are 2 to 2½ miles and 2 to 2½ hours in length. They are scheduled to begin approximately one hour before sunset. The terrain is sandy, with some rock outcroppings. Some of these can be skirted, but some must be climbed. We will return to the parking area in the fading light after sunset on an alternate trail or along a rocky old mining road. As space is limited, advance registration is required and can be made by calling the visitor center at (520) 733-5158. **This program will also be offered on April 19 at 5:00 p.m.**

April 6 1:15 p.m. Masters of Microscopes: 75 Years to Decode the Desert

Our understanding of saguaro cactus ecology today is thanks to several fearless botanists who made their home at the edge of the Tucson Mountains in 1909, to count cacti and watch the desert grow. In the program, meet these few, whose investigations first made sense of the Sonoran Desert's thorny bewildering life forms and whose fierce love for the desert made Saguaro National Park more than just a conservationist's daydream.

April 6 3:15 p.m. Thelma's World: Meet the Desert Tortoise

Spy on the tortoises's private life and learn to track them with radiotelemetry.

April 7 1:15 p.m. A Hohokam Woman's Day

Take a 30 minute, 100 yard walk in our Cactus Garden Walk to discover how a Hohokam Woman may have used the plants for medicinal solutions and food for her family. Program is accessible. **Also offered April 8 at 11:45 a.m.**

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April 18 5:30 p.m. "Moon Take Night Make Day" Hike

This gentle, relatively flat, 2½ mile hike travels up a desert wash during the transition from day to night. The hike takes approximately 3 hours. **Reservations are required**, and can be made by calling 733-5158.

April 19 thru 27 10:15 a.m. and 2:15 p.m. National Park Week Trivia Game

Help us celebrate National Park Week! Play the National Park trivia game with us and learn more about your national parks. Prizes offered to the winners. Program is accessible. A special exhibit about the national parks in Arizona will be displayed in the visitor center this week.

April 25 10:45 a.m. The CCC and its Impact on Saguaro National Park

2008 is the 75th anniversary of the Civilian Conservation Corps, a Depression-era work program that had a great influence on National, State, and County parks throughout the Nation. Saguaro's trails, picnic areas, and scenic drives were established during this program. A brief history of the CCC in this area will be presented by a park ranger. Because it is National Park Week, a **special tour** of the site of Camp Pima, a CCC camp located in Saguaro National Park West, will be offered after the talk. Approx. 2 hours.

April 26 10:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. National Junior Ranger Day

Help celebrate National Junior Ranger Day 2008. Join a park ranger for a two-hour, one-mile guided hike in Javelina Wash. Hikes are scheduled at 10:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. There will be a graduation ceremony in the Visitor Center Auditorium following the hike. Dress for the weather, bring water, wear comfortable hiking shoes, and a hat. This event is for ages 6-13 and families must attend with the Junior Rangers. Space is limited and reservations are required. Please call the Red Hills Visitor Center at 733-5158. There is no charge for this event.

April 26 4:00 p.m. The Wonderful World of Desert Bugs!

Our Special Guest Speaker Barb Skye is from the Sonoran Arthropod Studies Institute (SASI) which is a non-profit education and conservation organization dedicated to raising appreciation for the desert's little creatures. Join the SASI staff as they exhibit live animals and share natural history stories about tarantulas, scorpions, vinegaroons and more! Theater at Visitor's Center. 30 minutes. Program is accessible.

Daily Programs

Both districts of Saguaro National Park offer daily patio talks, garden walks and short desert hikes. Please contact either visitor center for schedules or check the park web site at www.nps.gov/sagu Program schedules are subject to change. **Please call the visitors center to confirm program is being given.**

Red Hills Visitor Center (Saguaro West)
2700 North Kinney Road
Tucson, AZ 85743
(520) 733-5158

Rincon Mountain District (Saguaro East)
3693 S. Old Spanish Trail
Tucson, AZ 85730
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